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AGRICULTURAL MARKETING

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demonstrate for a better diet

IF YOU LIKE TO COOK, are an easy speaker, and enjoy meeting people, you might consider taking on a food demonstration. Here is some advice from Sophie Leavitt, based on 5 years of volunteer work with food programs in Florida and Pennsylvania.

She has found that people getting food help—in the form of donated foods or food stamps—must know how to plan meals and prepare food that their families will like if they are going to make any improvements in their diets. Simple demonstrations with samples to taste at the distribution center, at clinics, churches, neighborhood centers or schools can help re-assure people that they can make good use of the food help they're getting.

To start with, it's best to work as a team, if you can, because a good demonstration requires a lot of work. Involve as many individuals and groups as possible, including church leaders, community organizations and local officials. The Welfare Department, Health Department, Community Action Program, and the local Agricultural Extension Service can give valuable professional support.

The local welfare official in charge of the food program can tell you how to get samples of donated foods for use in demonstration and teaching programs in either food stamp or donated foods areas.

In planning a food demonstration, allot about three-fourths of your time for the food demonstration itself, leaving the rest of the time

for socializing. Use this social part of your program for visiting with the group and for refreshments, which can be made by youth groups or adult community groups. This social part can be valuable because you can learn some of the group's problems and you will become better acquainted.

Before the demonstration itself, cook any foods that would take longer than the allotted demonstration time.

Check your stove and refrigerator also to prevent mishaps during the demonstration programs. But don't panic if they should occur.

Instead, bring your audience with you, telling them these problems are just like those that come up at home. For emergencies, keep handy a hot plate and a portable oven to bake in. If, as in some places, the people have no oven, switch to recipes with "top-of-the-stove" cooking.

Be sure to arrange the tables and chairs where you will demonstrate in the best viewing position. For the most enjoyment and the best rapport with the audience, a classroom like situation should be avoided.

If some of the people in your audience don't know how to cook or prepare a certain food, let them come to the demonstration table and do it themselves. Audience participation will reduce their fear of trying new things and increase their satisfaction and enjoyment.

If someone has a different way of doing a recipe, ask him to show you and the group how it's done. If you



"To start with, it's best to work as a team . . ."

take whatever women and men in the audience have to offer, you will learn with the rest of the group. As an aside, if something does not taste good, give them a chance to criticize it and take their remarks gracefully.

After the demonstration return everything to its original condition, wash up anything you have spilled, and replace broken items. Although routine, straightening up is important when you are using a church or other community facilities.

There are many valuable resources that community organizations can provide for a food education program. They might raise funds to help supply food, door prizes and perhaps small pieces of equipment for the demonstration, refreshments for the social hour, transportation to help low-income people get to the programs, and babysitting service for young children. Most of all they can help develop community support. □



*For mothers,
children,
and babies:*

FOODS FOR HEALTH

THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA took a firm step to help maintain the health of young children and their mothers with the announcement by Mayor Walter E. Washington that the District would participate in the Supplemental Food Program. The program provides nutritious foods that youngsters need to grow and develop in the pre-school years.

The step was guided as well as firm—it took only six weeks to get the program organized and operating.

The program, with food made available by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, is administered by the D.C. Department of Public Health. Mrs. Lois Earl, chief of the D.C. Nutrition Services Division, is the project director.

The Supplemental Foods Program provides selected nutritious foods to new mothers, mothers-to-be, babies,

and young children for better health. The foods given are evaporated milk, corn syrup, nonfat dry milk, canned juice and vegetables, scrambled egg mix, iron-fortified farina, instant potatoes fortified with vitamins A and C, peanut butter, and canned meat or poultry.

Supplemental foods are available to those in eligible categories who are determined by medical authorities to be in need of such assistance without regard to whether they are taking part in the Food Stamp Program, which has been providing extra food buying power for low-income D.C. residents since July 1965. District health officials expect the Supplemental Food Program will reach approximately 45,000 D.C. residents by the end of the year.

Those who are eligible to receive the free, supplemental foods include women, during pregnancy and for a period of up to 12 months after the birth of their baby, and children through five years of age. All must be eligible for health services provided by the D.C. Health Department facilities. Authorization is based on health needs.

Authorization centers have been set up in 15 Health Department facilities which provide health supervision for mothers and children. When the physician at the health center decides the patient needs supplemental foods—he, his nurse, and the nutritionist or social worker assigned to the clinic can issue the authorization for the supplemental foods. A supplemental foods coupon book is then issued to the recipient. Eligibility is good for six months, and is reviewed at intervals not to exceed six months.

The mother selects the food distribution center most convenient for her and the name of the center is stamped on the coupon book cover. The coupons provide for semi-monthly distribution.

In the District, one warehouse services nine distribution centers. Under an agreement with the District, USDA arranges for shipment and delivery of foods to the warehouse during a specified shipping or delivery period. From that point the municipal government assumes responsibility. □

USDA'S WATCHDOG

Is Added Protection

By L. L. Gast

BESIDES PROVIDING inspectors for all meat and poultry shipped across State lines, the Federal meat and poultry inspection programs also include an enforcement team which acts as a key second line of defense in protecting consumers.

The "in-plant" inspectors make sure that all animals slaughtered are free from disease, that plants are sanitary, and that the final product is wholesome and properly labeled. Should the inspectors themselves or other sources find that the output of certain plants does not comply with the law, the task becomes one for the Compliance and Evaluation Staff in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service.

Lack of compliance with the meat and poultry inspection laws may take a variety of forms: counterfeit inspection stamps are sometimes used on meat which has not been federally inspected; a product label may be incorrect; an uninspected product may be shipped illegally in interstate commerce, for instance.

A variety of sources contribute information to the C&E Staff concerning illegal or questionable activities. Inspection personnel, such as the inspectors themselves, frequently alert C&E officials to possible wrongdoing. State and local regulatory officials also provide valuable information and assistance. In addition, the C&E Staff's own planned compliance program and informants or anonymous callers furnish some of the information which leads to action by C&E.

The C&E Staff is distributed through eight regional offices, with the same boundaries as the regions which comprise the national C&MS Consumer Protection Program. Virtually all of the staff is stationed in the various field offices, although the headquarters is in Washington, D.C.

The key enforcement tool of the C&E Staff is authority to detain, as an administrative action, suspect meat or poultry for up to 20 days. Within that time, the owner of the product may remedy the deficiency. A packer, for example, may need to correctly label certain products detained because the original labeling is considered false or misleading. Once the labeling is corrected, the product may be released.

Assuming proper action is not taken by the owner of a detained product during the 20-day period, C&E moves for a court order to have the product seized for violation of Federal law. Upon seizure, the determination as to disposition of the product rests with the court. A typical week would have the C&E Staff bring about two dozen detention actions, totaling about a quarter million pounds of meat and poultry. From the time the Wholesome Meat Act was passed in 1967 and the Wholesome Poultry Products Act in 1968, up to July 10, 1969, 7,152,479 pounds of product had been detained in 655 actions.

Most often, the owners of the detained product will take proper remedial action. This may, in the case of labeling questions, consist of correcting the product labels. In other cases, especially where the suitability of the product for human food is concerned, C&E officials will be sure the product is not allowed to enter human food channels.

Voluntary action, rather than compliance ordered by the courts, is

the goal of the C&E Staff.

To further this goal of voluntary compliance, the C&E Staff implements two programs. The first of these is the planned compliance program which is primarily directed at preventing violations from occurring, but failing that, detecting them at an early stage.

Underlying this approach is the realization that compliance with the inspection laws can best be assured by concentrating on the most likely violators. These are considered to be those with a history of noncompliance and others, who because of the nature of their operations, are considered to be potential risks to maintaining the wholesomeness of meat and poultry available to the consumer.

The C&E Staff also conducts a planned evaluation program. This is an independent appraisal of the effectiveness of the meat and poultry inspection system. In this multi-phase effort, C&E personnel review the functions of the various units in the Consumer Protection Program. This is aimed at identifying real or potential trouble spots, and recommending corrective action. This program also involves additional evaluation studies which have been specifically requested.

Through this "watchdog" or surveillance approach to the meat and poultry inspection programs, violations can be kept to a minimum—both in seriousness and numbers. When violations do occur, however, the C&E Staff takes "on the spot" action to keep any unfit products from entering consumer channels. □

The author is Director of the Compliance and Evaluation Staff, Consumer Protection Programs, C&MS, USDA.

Timely Reports for a Changing Turkey Market

By Dick Brueckner

IN THE CONSTANTLY changing world of marketing, government service programs must frequently be changed to reflect new conditions in the marketplace.

The turkey market is no exception. This is the story of how the Federal-State Market News Service has altered its services to meet the challenge of change in turkey marketing.

The market news service is provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in cooperation with State departments of agriculture. Skilled market reporters gather daily information on prices, on supply, on demand for most agricultural commodities, and issue timely, unbiased reports to farmers, processors, shippers, anyone who might need the information.

The purpose of market news is to assure that all persons marketing agricultural commodities have the same information—so that all are equal in the marketplace.

Traditional marketing of live turkeys was the responsibility of the growers. Each individual farmer negotiated with a buyer to market his flock. The buyer might be a trucker, a broker, or a processor. And the farmer received his payment on the basis of the class and weight of the live birds.

So in the past, the market news service gathered the prices of turkeys sold live right off the farm and issued daily reports on these prices. In some areas, weekly prices of ready-to-cook turkeys—turkeys sold by the packer to distributors, through brokers, and to retail buyers—were also reported.

But things have changed. Not as many turkeys are really sold right off the farm any more—60 to 70 percent are sold under some kind of contract. Consequently, the information received on daily “on-farm” price negotiations became so limited that market releases were changed from daily reports to weekly summaries.

This left an enormous gap in available daily market news information.

People in the poultry business wanted:

- More timely market news reports—on a *daily* basis.
- More meaningful reports—reports on actual price negotiations. Since turkeys weren't being priced on the farm as much as before, the sales of ready-to-cook turkeys—the point where change of ownership actually took place—were more meaningful.
- More comprehensive reports—from the major areas where turkeys are produced and processed and from the large consumer areas where turkeys are used.

To understand why this gap in market news occurred, we must first understand the recent changes in the turkey marketing system.

The biggest change has been in the nature of the system. Contract selling and selling by “grade-yield” has largely taken the place of the traditional live-turkey sales off the farm.

A contract sale works something like this: Someone other than the farmer (perhaps a processor or a feed company) contracts with a farmer to raise turkeys. In the sim-

plest form of contracting, the buyer promises to accept the farmer's birds when they are ready to be slaughtered, at a price based on some agreed-upon market.

More complex forms of contracting also exist, in which the contractor might agree to provide the turkey poults, the feed, the medication, sometimes even the farm buildings. In these types of contracts—known as integrated projects—the farmer in effect becomes an employee of the contractor (called an integrator). The farmer really only contributes his know-how, his facilities, and his labor, and is paid either a flat fee or a piece rate on the number of turkeys produced.

But in most types of contract sales—whether totally integrated or not—the final payment received by the farmer is not determined entirely at the time the farmer sells his turkeys. This payment—and often the minimum price of the birds themselves—may be determined months before actual sale, when the contract was written.

So we can no longer rely on the “live” price to get a true picture of the market system. In today's turkey industry, almost the same as, in the broiler-fryer industry, the first time the birds really change hands is often after they are slaughtered and eviscerated—when they are “ready to cook.”

Another basic—and increasingly more important—change in marketing is the purchase of turkeys on the “grade-yield” basis. In this system of marketing, a producer contracts his birds to a processor and is paid according to the percentage of birds

rated top quality after they are processed. No longer is the price based on the live birds, but on the final U.S. Grade A quality yield of the ready-to-cook turkeys. Here again, the "live" price ceases to be as important in price-determination as the price of the finished product.

With the market practices changing so radically, the market news intelligence also needed to change to keep up with the times.

So in February 1969, a new report was issued. Called the daily carlot/trucklot trading report, it covers volume sales of large lots (railroad car or truck loads) of ready-to-cook turkeys sold at major terminal markets: Chicago, Los Angeles, and New York. Prices of ready-to-cook turkeys at all these markets are reported in a single, once-a-day tabular report.

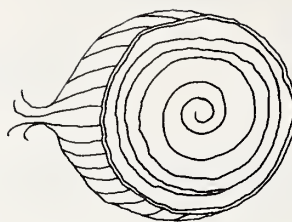
Along with this report is a simplified, capsule statement called the "National Turkey Market at a Glance," for easier reading in this busy world. Both of these items are now included in poultry market news reports released from major production and marketing areas.

These new reports answer the basic needs of the industry, but another area of coverage is needed, and is planned for this fall. Not only do we need information from the consuming areas (like Chicago, Los Angeles, and New York), we also need information from producing areas.

This report—giving shipping point information from the Central States (Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, Wisconsin, Nebraska, and North and South Dakota)—will also be issued daily instead of weekly. Reports from other producing areas are planned for the future.

These new reports will bring the market news service on turkeys more in step with the changing times. More timely information (daily), more accurate information (on large-volume sales of ready-to-cook birds), and more pertinent information (from major producing and consuming areas) will now be available to the turkey marketing industry—from farmer to retailer. □

The author is Chief, Market News Branch, Poultry Division, C&MS, USDA.



Bone Up On Steak

STEAK! MOST PEOPLE love it. But it takes some know-how to come up with the broiled-to-perfection cut of meat most of us envision when we hear the word "steak."

There are many different types of steak, and a wide range of quality. How much do you really know about this all-American favorite? Try this quiz from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service and find out. Check only one answer for each question.

1 The USDA grade mark for meat is a:

- a. circle.
- b. shield.
- c. triangle.

2 The USDA grade mark on the steak you buy is assurance of:

- a. wholesomeness.
- b. quality.
- c. both.
- d. neither.

3 USDA Prime T-Bone steak compared to USDA Good T-Bone steak:

- a. is more tender, juicy, and flavorful.
- b. has more protein.
- c. can be broiled, whereas USDA Good T-Bone cannot be successfully broiled.

4 Porterhouse, T-Bone and Club steaks are:

- a. all tender steaks.
- b. all from the short loin.
- c. all good for broiling in the USDA Prime, Choice, and Good grades.
- d. all of these.
- e. none of these.

5 Your rich uncle is coming to dinner. The steak you would choose to serve him is:

- a. USDA Prime round.
- b. USDA Prime sirloin.

- c. USDA Prime porterhouse.
- d. USDA Prime T-Bone.

6 A flank steak, a rib steak, and a shoulder arm steak differ in tenderness because:

- a. they are different grades.
- b. they come from different parts of the carcass.
- c. they differ in protein content.

7 A "first-cut" blade chuck is less tender than other blade chuck steaks.

- a. True.
- b. False.

8 For best eating, an arm chuck steak should be broiled.

- a. True.
- b. False.

9 Round steak is often divided into three portions, the top, bottom, and eye-of-round. The most tender of these three portions is:

- a. Top.
- b. Bottom.
- c. Eye.

10 "London Broil" on a restaurant menu usually means a:

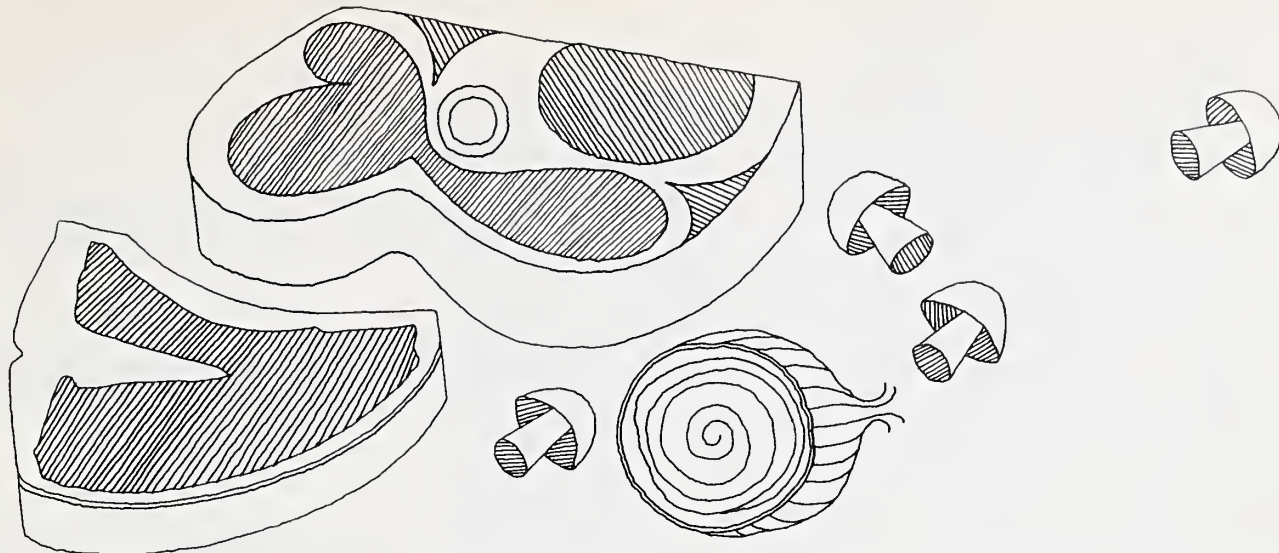
- a. Chuck steak.
- b. Sirloin steak.
- c. Club steak.
- d. Flank steak.

11 Steaks sold under names such as Western, California, Cheyenne, petite, butter, finger, breakfast and his 'n' hers are usually:

- a. Very tender.
- b. Loin steaks.
- c. Cut from the chuck.

12 You love medium rare steak and have decided to broil one tonight. Being a last minute shopper, you find only two steaks left in the counter—one $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch thick and the other $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches thick. It is best to choose:

- a. $\frac{3}{4}$ inch.
- b. $1\frac{1}{4}$ inch.



Answers:

1 (b) shield. The shield-shaped grade mark containing the letters "USDA" and the name of the grade, such as Prime, Choice, etc., can be found on most cuts of graded meat. A round mark is used by USDA to show that meat has passed inspection for wholesomeness.

2 (b) quality, strictly speaking. But also count yourself right if you answered (c) both, because beef must first pass inspection of wholesomeness before it can be USDA graded.

3 (a) USDA Prime is the ultimate in tenderness, juiciness and flavor, but grade makes little difference in protein content. Because a T-bone is a relatively tender cut, however it may be broiled in Choice and Good grades as well as Prime.

4 (d) all of these. Give yourself half credit if you picked (a), (b), or (c). Porterhouse, T-bone and club steaks are all cut from the short loin, one of the most tender portions of a beef carcass. They are excellent for broiling in any of the top three grades. USDA Prime, Choice or Good.

5 (c) USDA Prime Porterhouse—often considered the best steak of all. The T-bone is very similar, but has less tenderloin. Sirloin is a more variable steak, containing several muscles, and round steak is less tender than the other steaks named.

6 (b) They come from different parts of the carcass. As the names imply, the rib steak comes from the rib, the same part of the carcass from which rib roasts are cut—one of the most tender portions; the

flank steak is cut from the flank, one of the least tender parts; and the shoulder arm steak comes from the "arm" portion of the chuck, a definitely less-tender portion of the beef carcass. There is very little difference in protein content of the lean of any of the cuts of beef. Beef is graded in carcass form; therefore, any cut from a USDA Choice beef carcass, for example, will also carry the USDA Choice grade, whether it is one of the most or the least tender cuts from that carcass. But the higher the grade of any *particular* cut, such as a rib steak, the greater the degree of tenderness, juiciness, and flavor it will tend to have in relation to the same cut of lower grade. So you have to know the cut, as well as the grade, to make sure you get the kind of steak you want.

7 (b) False. The "first-cut" from the blade section of the chuck is the one next to the rib roast—and it contains a larger portion of that same rib-eye muscle than other blade cuts. This round muscle, adjacent to the rib bone, can be cut out and broiled for a delicious "Delmonico" steak if the cut you buy is graded USDA Prime, Choice, or Good.

8 (b) False. The arm chuck comes from one of the less tender portions of the beef carcass, so even in the higher grades this cut is better cooked with moist heat—used as Swiss steak or braised.

9 (a) Top. This portion can be broiled successfully if it is USDA Prime or Choice. Bottom round is better cooked with moist heat, regardless of grade. Eye of round is also a less tender cut, but if sliced

thin, USDA Prime and Choice eye-of-round can be pan broiled.

10 (d) There's no guarantee, but in most cases the term "London Broil" is used for flank steak. This is definitely a less tender cut but it can be marinated to help tenderize and flavor it, then broiled and sliced very thin on the diagonal, which also helps to make it "eat better."

11 (c) These are *usually* names employed for steaks cut from the chuck. But there is really no way to tell. The best way to get the kind of steak you want is to shop at a store that uses the standard terminology for its meat cuts, such as blade chuck, arm chuck, etc.

12 (b) 1¼ inch. For best results in broiling, a steak should be at least an inch thick—especially if you like your beef medium rare. With a thin steak, it would be very difficult to avoid getting it well done.

Score yourself two points for each correct answer.

20-24 Excellent. You must come from a family of steak eaters. You really know the beef you buy.

16-20 Very Good. You know quite a bit about beef, but you still might profit from the Consumer and Marketing Service booklet, "How to Buy Beef Steaks," G-145.

8-16 Fair. Since buying meat eats up one-fourth of every food dollar, you would find it very valuable to own C&MS's booklet, "How to Buy Beef Steaks."

Below 8. RUSH! Send for the booklet tomorrow! Write to Office of Information, Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. ☐

Food Stamps Are A Welcome



ne Help



ALAMEDA COUNTY, Calif., is one of many counties across the country that has started a Food Stamp Program during the past year. In mid-1967 county leaders and various organizations set out to start a Food Stamp Program to help give low-income families the means to buy more and better food to improve their diets.

Months before the program began in August 1968, the Alameda County Welfare Department and the U.S. Department of Agriculture together set up the administrative procedures and operations. The help of area individuals and organizations was also enlisted to inform the retail food industry, area banks, the general public, and the low-income people about the program.

One of the assisting groups was the Bay Area Grocers Association which was particularly instrumental in orienting county grocers to food stamps. Well over 35 groups and organizations in Oakland alone were involved in spreading the news of the program.

To advertise the program, a local food chain and radio station prepared and sponsored a series of radio spots on the types of households that can qualify for food stamps. They also gave the telephone number of the local welfare office to call for information and certification. One radio station ran public service spot

announcements valued at close to \$7,000.

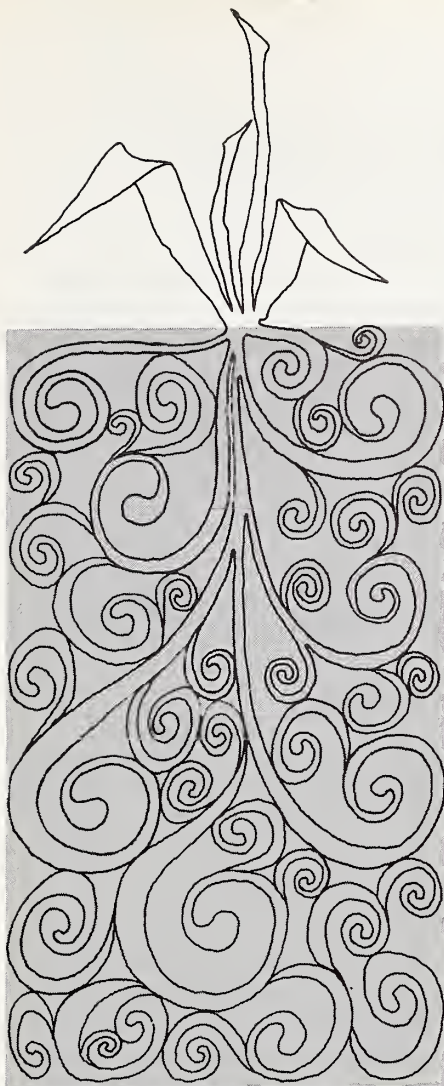
The county welfare office developed methods to make the certification process simpler and more convenient. A checklist was instituted so that applicants not on public assistance could be interviewed by telephone. Where necessary, appointments were arranged. For a public assistance household, a card explaining the program was enclosed with each assistance check.

Recognizing the need for nutrition education, Mrs. Araminta King, a nutritionist with the San Francisco Dairy Council, began discussing nutrition with low-income homemakers before the Food Stamp Program began. About 300 teacher aides in the Oakland Unified School District were among those she instructed.

The Federal Extension Service also is training several nutrition aides recruited from low-income neighborhoods in the Alameda area to help low-income homemakers improve family nutrition.

Over 40,000 low-income residents now have more food and better diets because of the combined efforts of many concerned citizens and organizations in Alameda County. A nutrition aide who uses food stamps (shown above with her family) explained how the people there feel about the program when she stated simply, "It sure helps." □





WHAT'S AT THE ROOT OF AN UGLY LAWN?

SO THE GRASS SEED you planted last spring came up spotty? Or failed to grow at all? Or was smothered by weeds?

Possibly at the root of it all was the seed you bought—and your own need for knowing more about how to make a wise purchase.

Before squandering money on poor seed this fall—and wasting time and effort as well—take this quiz to find out how much you know about choosing seed:

Q How can I tell from the package itself how well the lawn seed inside will grow?

A By studying the label carefully before you buy. Check the germination percentage shown for each kind of seed present in the container. An 80% germination, for instance, means that when the seed was tested, 8 out of 10 seeds produced normal plants under favorable conditions.

Q Does seed lose ability to grow as it ages?

A Yes, so you should check the label to learn the month and year that the seed was tested for germination. If the test date is no older than 6 months, you can usually rely on the germination percentage as being reliable.

Q Does the label show what kinds of seed are in the container?

A Yes—as well as the percentages of each. For instance, a mixture might be labeled: 52% Kentucky bluegrass, 22% Red fescue, and 20% Annual ryegrass. Whether you want such a mixture depends on what your lawn will be used for, what kinds of grass grow best in your part of the country, whether your lawn will be in the sun or shade, and other considerations. To help answer these questions, write for “How to Buy Lawn Seed,” Home and Garden Bulletin No. 169, from Office of Information, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. 20250.

Q In buying lawn seed, am I paying for some weed seeds too?

A Yes, but the label tells you how much to expect. It also tells you the percentages of inert matter (chaff, small stones, etc.) and other-crop seeds that are present. Remember, if you choose lawn seed showing high amounts of these “Other Ingredients” on the label, you won’t be getting as many productive seeds as the net weight might indicate.

Q Must the label spell out what kind of weed seeds are present?

A Only if they’re noxious weeds. Each State has a list of seeds it considers “noxious” or objectionable. If any of these are present in lawn seed sold in the State, the number per ounce or pound must be shown on the label. The number of noxious-

weed seeds may not exceed a limit set under the State seed law.

Q Do all States have seed laws?

A Yes. Each of the 50 States has a law requiring labeling of seed containers. These State laws contain labeling requirements similar to those of the Federal Seed Act, which is administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Consumer and Marketing Service. Most lawn seed is marketed across State lines and must conform to requirements of this Federal truth-in-labeling law.

Q There seem to be wide differences among prices of lawn seed offered by stores. Should the “bargain buy” be avoided?

A Not necessarily, but what may appear to you as a bargain may produce a coarse, ugly lawn. So, to learn the answer, look to the label. In the long run, the price you pay for good seed of the preferred kinds and varieties is a small price to pay for a beautiful lawn, considering the few pounds usually needed to seed an ordinary sized lawn. Take this into account, too, when making your selection: There are more seeds to the pound of fine-textured grasses than of coarse ones—for example, about 2 million seeds of fine-textured Kentucky bluegrass as opposed to 225,000 of the coarse kinds, tall fescue and ryegrass. Fine-textured grasses, with their narrow leaves, give a carpet-like lawn. Coarse kinds, which tend to grow in clumps and have wider leaves and coarser stems, are ideal for hard-wear areas. The label indicates which are fine-textured and which are coarse kinds.

Q How can I compare prices of different packages, based on the quality stated on the labels?

A One way is to compute the actual value of the seed you’re considering. Multiply the percentage of pure seed by the germination. Then divide this result into the actual cost per pound. For example, seed costing 90¢ a pound, with 80% germination and 85% purity, gives this result: $80\% \times 85\% = 68\%$ pure-live seed. Dividing 90¢ by 68%, you get the cost per pound of pure-live seed—or \$1.32. □

U.S. BUTTER STANDARDS

REACH GOLDEN YEAR

WHEN TODAY'S SHOPPER buys U.S. Grade AA butter, she knows she's getting the best! What's more, her mother and perhaps her grandmother had the same quality guide. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the official U.S. Standards for Grades of Butter, developed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The grade standards for butter are used by producers, processors, and marketers of butter. Last year about 65 percent of all butter sold in this country was officially graded by the Dairy Division of USDA's Consumer and Marketing Service. The grade standards provide a common yardstick for processors in determining the quality of the product and are an important shoppers' aid in the supermarket.

Although the official butter standards have been widely used over the past 50 years, the road leading to their adoption in 1919 was hazardous. Some 70 years earlier the dairy industry was aware that it needed a uniform system for the grading of butter. With the advent of creameries, butter quality was assigned terms such as "fine," "good," and "fair."

Then, during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the dairy industry established a general grading system using such terms as "firsts," "seconds," and "thirds." The first commercial inspection of butter also occurred during this time. A score card was used to evaluate butter for flavor, body, color, salt, and package.

The system was unsuccessful. The main problem proved to be lack of uniformity in the interpretation and application of the grades by different inspectors.

To help settle this problem, USDA inaugurated a dairy products inspection service in New York in 1906.

The object was to aid in improving the quality of creamery butter by inspecting butter upon the request of producers, and reporting defects back to the creamery. Federal inspectors also worked in conjunction with State inspectors, who in turn assisted the creameries in quality improvement. But creameries took little or no interest in this service, and USDA discontinued the program in 1912.

The industry tried several other methods of grading butter but to no avail. Leaders in the industry became increasingly aware of the need for developing a permanent, uniform system of quality standards. This led to reconsideration of a program of inspecting and grading butter, to be operated and supervised by the Federal Government. As a result, USDA, working with the industry, established the first official

standards for butter. They became effective May 28, 1919.

The system of grading butter first employed by USDA incorporated a score card with ratings for body, color, salt, and package. Despite its intricacies, the grading system brought reasonably uniform results.

In the 1930's, however, USDA began to experiment with a more direct method of grading butter, eliminating the score card. In this method, flavor and defects in body, color, and salt were rated independently of each other. Rating the package as a factor in determining quality of butter was discontinued. The revised standards were more specific, complete, and informative.

Other changes were made over the years in the butter standards—in 1940, 1943, 1954, and 1960. New tools were developed for butter grading, and it became more sophisticated and exact.

The official butter grading service—now under the supervision of USDA's Consumer and Marketing Service—has remained voluntary. Butter is graded upon the request of the applicant and in accordance with the official U.S. butter standards. A fee is charged for the service.

The value of the service has long been widely recognized by an ever-increasing number of merchandisers and users of butter, including retail food markets, dairies, restaurants, hotels, steamship lines, public and private institutions, bakeries, confectioners, soup manufacturers—even banks. Banks and others who make loans use the grade standards as a means of arriving at fair values when making loans on stored butter.

Now—50 years after the official U.S. standards for butter were adopted—more than 600 brands of butter carry the U.S. grade shield of quality. □

The author is Chief, Standardization Branch, Dairy Division, C&MS, USDA.

CONSUMER AND MARKETING BRIEFS

Selected short items on C&MS activities in consumer protection, marketing services, market regulation, and consumer food programs.

MORE CHILDREN ARE EATING BREAKFAST AT SCHOOL

Since it started in January 1967, the School Breakfast Program, administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service, has more than tripled in the number of children eating and schools serving free or low-cost breakfasts at schools.

Breakfast at 2760 schools in the country last year provided some 300,000 children with a good start toward meeting daily nutritional needs. The majority of these children were from needy families and received their breakfasts free or at a reduced price. Many of the breakfasts are simple and easy to fix, such as orange juice, cereal, and milk.

The price of breakfasts to the children who can afford to pay is 10 or 15 cents with most children served free since the programs are operated in low-income neighborhoods. The schools may use USDA-donated foods and are reimbursed up to 15 cents per meal by the department.

Teachers from all parts of the country testify that good breakfasts directly relate to reduced absenteeism and tardiness. They also observe that a good breakfast to start the day increases the alertness and attention span of the students as well as contributing to scholastic achievement and improved health.

As a teacher in North Carolina said about the breakfast program, "They've really come alive. After having a good meal, the children are ready to work."

Cleveland reported that absenteeism and tardiness dropped off sharply when they began serving breakfasts at 54 elementary schools in low-income areas of the city. In fact, the children eagerly awaited

their morning breakfast. Some children arrived at school as early as 45 minutes before breakfast time to wait for the doors to open.

Teachers say that in addition to better attendance, children are more attentive and responsive and there are less behavior problems when students have a good breakfast. A school principal in Kentucky reported a decrease in "desk-slumping" and sleeping, while a New York school administrator noted increases in weight, more class response and less fighting. Although the benefit of a breakfast to scholastic achievement has not been accurately measured, most concerned teachers believe there is a general improvement in health and performance. □

MINNESOTA AND WISCONSIN HELP THEIR DAIRY CO-OPS

When three or four small dairy processing cooperatives merge, the results can be more efficient operations, greater returns for the producer members, and greater bargaining power for the co-op. This is what the Minnesota and Wisconsin Departments of Agriculture are demonstrating through special merger and consolidation projects in their States, aided by the Matching Fund Program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service.

Mergers of dairy co-ops became feasible when improved trucks and roads and the use of bulk milk tanks on farms made it possible to haul milk from greater distances. All that was needed was to convince dairy co-op members that mergers would help—and to show them how to accomplish mergers.

In Minnesota and Wisconsin, project leaders with the State Departments of Agriculture study audit reports of co-ops to determine which

ones might be helped by mergers. They analyze costs—the cost of hauling milk to the processing plant, and labor, material, and other operating costs—and discuss these cost analyses with the co-op manager and board of directors, along with comparative costs for larger plants or plants manufacturing the same products.

The project leaders also develop plans and procedures for mergers and advise the boards of directors of dairy co-ops on how to analyze growth, capital, and operations.

In a little over 10 years, Wisconsin officials have helped in more than 100 mergers among dairy processing and bargaining cooperatives. At one time there were 3,000 creameries in Wisconsin. Currently there are 1,000 dairy plants, and a Governor's study has recommended an optimum number of 58.

One typical Wisconsin dairy merger involved 1,800 producers in five cooperatives. Total savings estimated as a result of the merger are \$450,000 this year or approximately \$260 per member.

In Minnesota, the number of cooperatives has declined over the past 15 years from 900 to 100. In 1968, assistance from the C&MS Matching Fund Program helped Minnesota officials bring about seven mergers involving 14 creameries. The savings in costs of operation for the first year are estimated at \$87,000.

Besides eliminating inefficient plants and providing higher returns to dairy farmers, the mergers should also help dairy co-ops in bargaining with large regional distributors and buyers of dairy products, such as chainstores.

These projects in Minnesota and Wisconsin are part of the work supported by the Matching Fund Program to help States improve marketing structure and increase producer bargaining power. □

FOOD TIPS

-from USDA's Consumer
and Marketing Service

Big Week for School Lunches:

NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH WEEK

October 12-18

Since 1946 when the National School Lunch Act was enacted, millions of school-age children across the country have been getting nutritious lunches each day.

In recognition of the vital role that the program plays in feeding the Nation's school children, Congress passed a joint resolution in 1962 designating the seven-day period beginning with the second Sunday in October each year as National School Lunch Week. This year the week of October 12-18 will be National School Lunch Week.

Special ceremonies and activities are planned to celebrate the twenty-third year of the program. Last year the lunch program helped offer noon meals to about 19.9 million children in nearly 76,000 schools in all parts of the country. Almost 3.4 billion meals were served through the program, and about 15 per cent of these were offered free or at a greatly reduced price to children whose parents could not afford the regular low price.

Through Federal-State-local cooperation, the National School Lunch Program has become the largest single food service industry in the Nation—more than a billion-dollar-a-year operation.

The National School Lunch Program, combined with the other child feeding programs, offers a concerted approach to improve the nutrition

of children. Although the school lunch program will be featured during the week's events, emphasis also will be placed on such other child nutrition programs as the School Breakfast Program, the Special Food Service Program for pre-school youngsters, and the Special Milk Program, all of which are administered by the Consumer and Marketing Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

This year more money and manpower are being put into these programs than ever before, particularly to reach more children from low-income families. For example, USDA has set a target of reaching 6.6 million needy children this year with free or reduced price lunches. This is the estimated number of children from low-income areas considered in need of better nutrition through school programs.

Realization of this goal will be another step toward fulfilling the intent of Congress when it passed the National School Lunch Act "to safeguard the health and well-being of the Nation's children." And National School Lunch Week this year is aimed at increasing public awareness of and involvement in all the child feeding programs so that the food and nutrition so vital to both mental and physical growth and development during a child's formative years can be provided. □

Baked potatoes, topped with butter or sour cream, are popular with practically everyone. Makes your mouth water just thinking about it, doesn't it? Do you know how to choose potatoes that will bake well? The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service says to look for reasonably smooth, well shaped, firm potatoes free from blemishes and decay. Both the variety and the area where the potatoes are grown are important factors affecting their baking quality. □

* * *

Butter enhances the flavor of many of your favorite foods. To insure the highest in quality, choose U.S. Grade AA butter, the best there is. U.S. Grade AA butter boasts a delicate, sweet flavor and a fine, highly pleasing aroma. It's made from high-quality, fresh, sweet cream, and has a smooth creamy texture and good spreadability.

Here are a few tips about butter, from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service. Store in original protective wrapper or container until ready to use. You can freeze extra amounts of butter, especially if you don't plan to use it within 2-3 days. Frozen butter will maintain its quality for up to 2 months. □



Mixed nuts that carry the USDA grade shield are checked by a USDA inspector both before and after packaging. Their size, color, and quality, and the percentage of each kind in the mixture must be up to grade.

Mixed Up about Mixed Nuts?

CUR-RUNCH! Mmmmmm. Yummy! Get out the nutcrackers! Fall is just about here and Halloween, Thanksgiving, and Christmas are coming—it's time to enjoy mixed nuts in the shell.

Almonds, filberts, and walnuts from the West Coast, pecans from the South and Southwest, and Brazil nuts from Brazil make up the handy packages you'll find in your market.

Several companies that package mixed nuts in the shell use the U.S. Department of Agriculture's continuous inspection service to assure the quality of the nuts they package for consumers. You'll find the USDA shield with the grade—U.S. Extra Fancy or U.S. Fancy—on packages of mixed nuts of the highest quality.

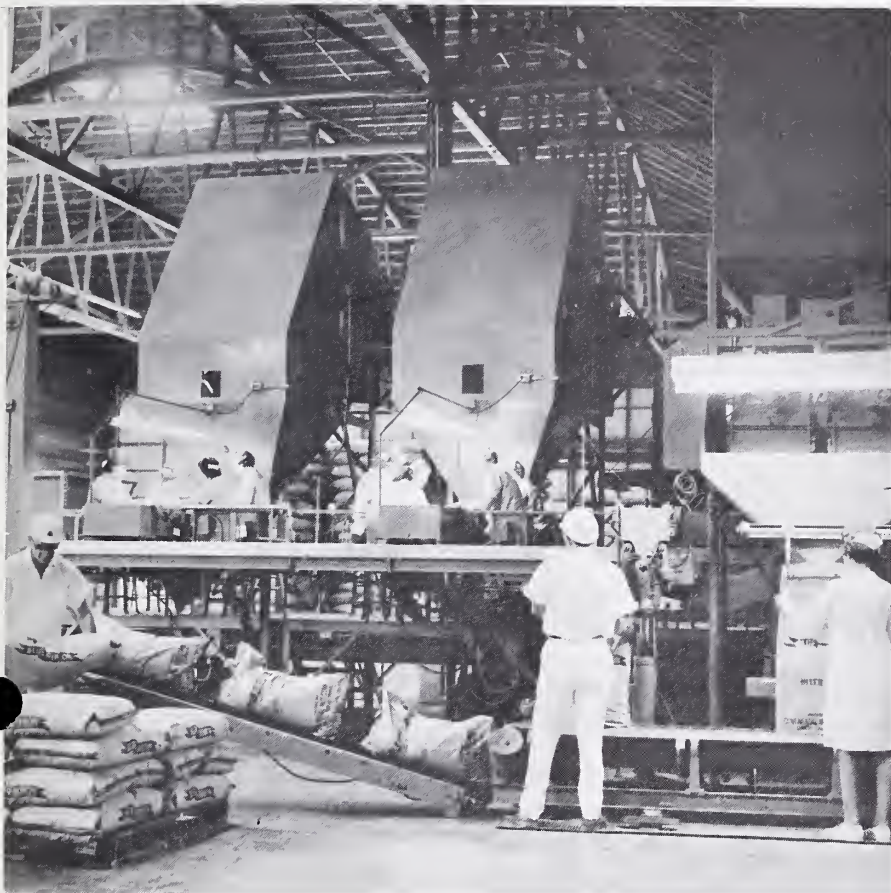
USDA's Consumer and Marketing Service provides the inspection service, for a fee, to companies who wish to have this assurance of quality for themselves and consumers.

First of all, inspectors from C&MS's Fruit and Vegetable Division examine all lots of nuts received at the plant to see that each kind is uniform in size and color and that the shells are clean and not cracked or broken. They also crack samples of the nuts and check the kernels: kernels must be well-developed, well-cured (properly dried) and not rancid, and defects must be minimal. During the mixing and packaging processes, the inspector is on hand to check the mixture to see that there isn't too little or too much of

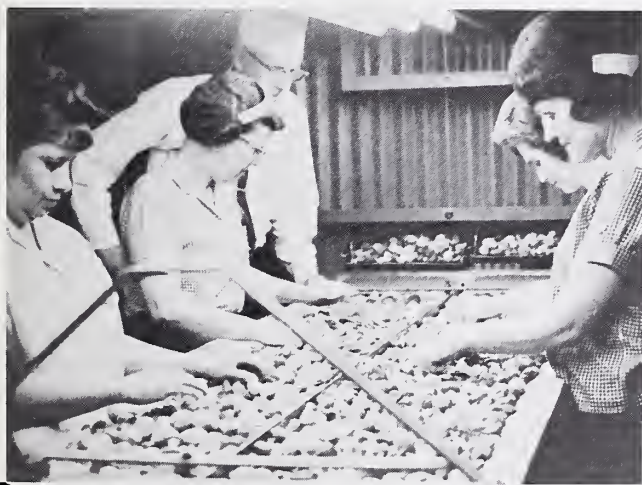
one kind of nut. After the nuts are packaged, he rechecks their quality and the percentage of each of the five nuts in the mixture. To be U.S. Extra Fancy or Fancy grade, there must be no less than 10 percent and no more than 40 percent of each kind of nut in the package.

You may sometimes find mixed nuts labeled U.S. Select or U.S. Commercial. The quality requirements for these nuts are not as strict as for those in the higher grades. The nuts may be smaller and the mixture may contain as little as 5 percent of any one kind of nut. Packages of these nuts may be labeled USDA-inspected but do not carry the grade shield.

The grade shield is your assurance of highest quality. □



Almonds, filberts, Brazil nuts, pecans, and walnuts are fed to sorting tables from the large hoppers at upper left and then filled in large bags (foreground) or small packages.



(Photos this page courtesy of Continental Nut Co.)

A USDA inspector observes the quality of nuts moving over the sorting table as the plant workers remove broken or defective nuts.



Small packages of mixed nuts are moved from the filling machine to table where they will be packed for shipment.

OFFICIAL BUSINESS



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COVER STORY

There will be no more mix-up about mixed nuts after you have read this article about USDA's inspection service. See page 14.



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